

Honorable Judge Douglas Wilkins,

My name is Jack McCarthy, I grew up in Lawrence, MA and at the age of 25, I was elected as a full time Alderman in the city as head of Health & Welfare. I served for 6 years as Chairman of the City Council and decided to leave to enter private business. In 1993, Mayor Sullivan left the Mayor's post in Lawrence and George Miller, the Council President, called me and asked if I could help him with the city as it was in receivership for two years and nothing was happening. He was not going to run for Mayor in November and I said I would and I knew George was straight as an arrow and my honesty would never be questioned. At that time, I was approached by a representative from Kelly Services, a municipal collection agency, who told me that the money the City was owed was outrageous and we were the only city in the Commonwealth that did not have this kind of service to collect back excise taxes that were owed for many years. I was on board to get this service implemented as soon as possible. After 3 weeks, George's wife took sick and he had to leave. I said I'm going with you. He asked me to talk to Lenny Degnan, who was going to be the next Mayor.

I spoke to Lenny, I told him I didn't think I should stay because our personalities were totally different and I didn't have the same feelings about Lenny as I did with George, I never knew Lenny on a personal level. I agreed to stay for two weeks and I figured at the end of that time I would be gone. After those two weeks, I saw a different Lenny Degnan than I thought I would. He had the greatest municipal financial mind than anybody in the State. Our meeting with Kelly Services took place. Lenny understood the amount of money we would be able to finally collect for the City and what a change it would make. We figured if Lenny was looking to be running for Mayor in the upcoming election there was no way he would stand a chance of winning because of the enemies he would make from doing this. Lenny stood up and said "get this started tomorrow! We started to bring back the City, Lenny had such a focus on this being a priority it was incredible. We knew that this wasn't going to make many people happy. We spoke often about holding people accountable for what they owed to the City, they were not going to like it because it was tucked under the radar for a long time and now it was coming to light. It was going to be difficult but he knew it was the right thing and that is all he cared about, it didn't bother him if he had to be considered the "bad guy" because he knew that somebody needed to do it and he was the guy. About one month before the primary, he announced he would run for Mayor, he lost by 60 votes to the next Mayor Mary Claire Kennedy. She then asked me to stay with her administration and I did. Before Mayor Kennedy left, the City of Lawrence was out of receivership and that was due to what Lenny sacrificed. It was through working with Lenny on all of these difficult matters and people were finally made to pay what they rightfully should have paid to the City many years prior.

Indeed, what we thought would happen did, Lenny made enemies and he was ok with it. He held his head high because he did the right thing for the City he loved. I